

Using Facebook to generate leads/sales

By  Bogosi Mtshegwa

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We as humans are in the best possible position we can be; the internet.



Image credit: Kaboompics // Karolina via [Pexels](https://www.pexels.com/).

I am fascinated by the power of this tool. The more I become practical about it, the more this realisation becomes tangible. I am beginning to see and experience that there is no way one can do business without utilising social media. You can try and reach your audiences in multiple ways, but it is becoming apparent that social media is the modern day or better version of door-to-door sales approach.

People are closer and more connected than ever before. Which means that the barriers of time and distance do not apply. The ability to connect to each other and be intimate about our feelings creates an environment where there is trust, and I believe that this (trust) absolves the "seller" from feeling like a "cold seller."

Here is the truth about social media; if you are in business, this is a sales tool. This may sound like an obvious statement, "like of course, everybody knows that." Everybody knows, but not everybody implements.

The beauty of this article is that I am not talking theory or quoting some textbook or blog or other articles. I am talking about something I did. It's practically incredible.

“ *...social media is the modern day or better version of door-to-door sales approach.* ”

A young businessman by the name of Tshepo Mohlala; who is the founder of a denim company, Tshepo The Jean Maker, is on a mission to sell 1,000 pairs of jeans in 60 days, #1000JeansIn60Days. This would be an average of about 16 to 17 pairs of jeans sold per day, for 60 days. I think the campaign officially kicks off next year, as he is just seeding the idea to get buy-in from people this side of the year.

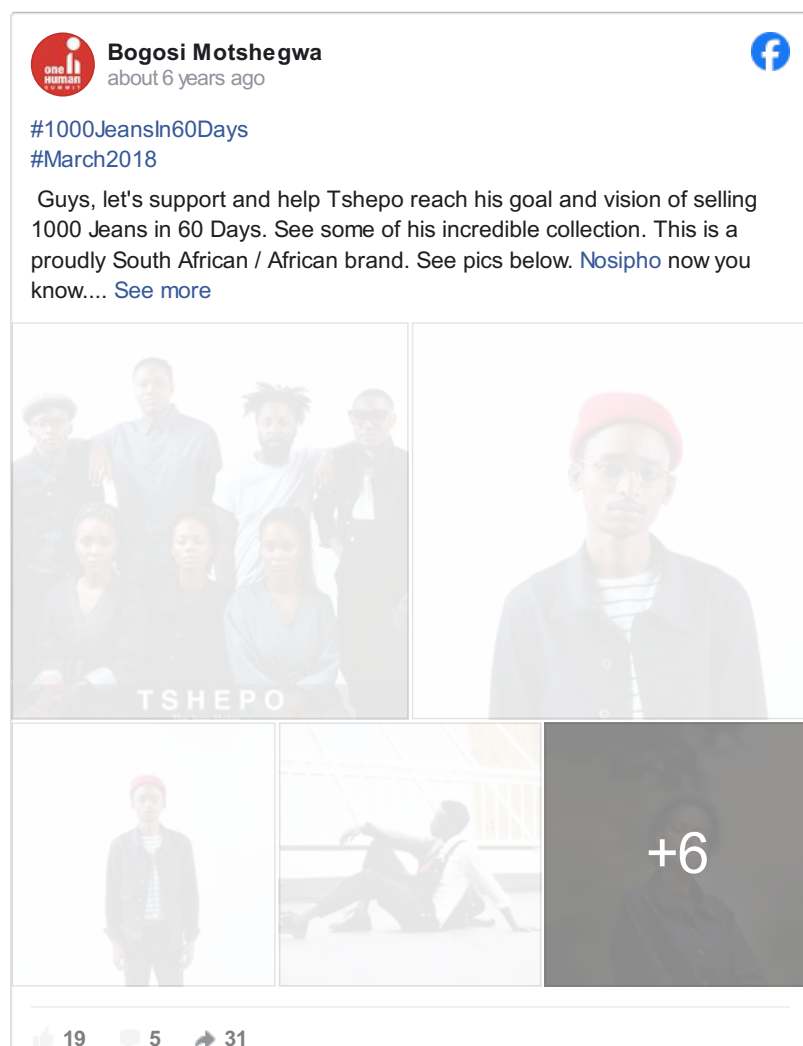
Generating business leads through Facebook

In support of his initiative, I shared a post on Facebook where I explained his vision and goal to my network and asked them to share the post as well. To date, at the time of this article being submitted for publishing, the post was shared nineteen times and there have already been four leads so far. Three are my friends on Facebook and are interested in

buying jeans from him and the fourth is someone outside of my network (we are not friends on Facebook). These are people asking questions, requesting more information and showing general interest.

What started as just a post to inform, has turned into potentially four completed sales. This is just from Facebook. No effort into Twitter and Instagram yet. The post is organic with no funds behind to promote it.

Below are conversations that took place:



(Original post by Bogosi Motshegwa in support of #1000JeansIn60Days)



(Potential buyer one, Meme)


Princess NA Mothiba ▶ Tshepo the jean maker

12 hrs · 🌐

Want a jean for me...I'm 1.74 all these jeans become too short..

 Love
  Comment
  Share
 


 You and Tshepo Mohlala
 Chronological ▾


Bogosi Motshegwa Tshepo Mohlala 👍
 Like · Reply · 11 hrs


Tshepo Mohlala You are my height. I can sort you out
 Love · Reply · ❤️ 1 · 1 hr


Tshepo Mohlala What size are you ?
 Love · Reply · ❤️ 1 · 1 hr


Princess NA Mothiba 42...
 Love · Reply · ❤️ 1 · 1 hr


 Write a reply...
 





 Write a comment...
 




(Potential buyer two, Princess)


Sipho Sam I have always wondered if Tshepo has a catalogue we can access...
 Love · Reply · ❤️ 1 · 16 hrs


Bogosi Motshegwa I imagine that more will be revealed sooner.
 Like · Reply · 👍 1 · 16 hrs


Tshepo Mohlala Absolutely. I can email you one
 Like · Reply · 👍 2 · 5 hrs


Sipho Sam Will inbox email..Dankie
 Like · Reply · 👍 1 · 5 hrs


Bogosi Motshegwa Awe! Nice one gents!
 Like · Reply · 👍 1 · 4 hrs


 Write a reply...
 




(Potential buyer three, Sipho)



(Potential buyer four, Malaiza)

This is just a post that was shared on my timeline and shared multiple times. All it cost was time and effort. This isn't my campaign, I'm just helping by deploying my energy and belief into the campaign.

Selling on Facebook takes time and effort

Unfortunately, this is something that most digital or social media agencies and companies don't have the luxury of.

All it cost me was time and effort, effort in the form of responding to people's questions and tagging some people. By nature, Facebook is a long-format conversational platform, and by applying that principle, actual transactions could happen. It's now up to Tshepo The Jean Maker to close the deals.

We all know that organic posts have a stifled reach, especially when the desire is to reach as many people as possible. With that said, I guess the biggest learning for me is that Facebook, and I am quite certain that Instagram more so than Twitter, can be used to close sales. I think this will appeal more to start-ups and SMMEs than big businesses. The trick is to do it yourself. Of course, it helps to have systems in place that enable for seamless online transactions, but having done this exercise, the nuanced success is in the conversations and the story behind the sale.

The #1000JeansIn60Days campaign is not just a sales pitch or campaign premised on solely closing the deal. It is a story of a young and ambitious entrepreneur who has set a goal and a vision. In South Africa, I am yet to come across denim brand that has an African name. I suppose the story is pregnant with pride and inspiration. It is more than just a sale.

Learnings for businesses

- Big businesses should ask themselves how better or clever they can and should be to fully leverage the power of social media. Whilst Facebook advertising provides reach and frequency, what else can brands do that is creative that will provide depth and resonance?
- Maybe it isn't only about scale as we have always thought it to be. Maybe it's about connecting and making sense to a

few people who will buy into the idea, and in turn, share with their networks (and I'm not talking influencers). Maybe it's not just about sponsored ads, but also resonating content.

- Can brands deploy some creative prowess into their creative content to ensure that they close sales on Facebook or Instagram? And I'm not talking about simply embedding a link that takes people to a click to buy page, but rather, immersing the brand deeply within the format of the platform? Getting intimate with people?
- Apart from what Facebook says is "best practice", I think brands and creative teams should put in the extra thought in how they can best behave on the platform. This is where empathy and being human comes in. Machine learning and AI can enable for automated responses and conversations, but what people really need is the human element. To hear a story. What's your story? The more the means through which we communicate become complex, the simpler will always be empathy.

In closing, here is the math of what I did in support of Tshepo The Jean Maker's dream (at the time of writing the article):

- Posts: 1
- Sponsored: 0
- Likes: 21
- Shares: 20 times (in less than 24 hours)
- Comments: Many
- Sales leads: 4

Whilst this may be more relevant to small businesses, I think the principles are universal for all businesses. I hope your efforts for 2018 are inspired.

ABOUT BOGOSI MOTSHEGWA

Bogosi Motshegwa is a strategic planner at Thinkerneur, a brand strategy consulting firm and is Advisory Council Member at Vega School of Design | Brand | Business. He is a brand consultant who specialises in but is not limited to, brand, digital and communication strategy.

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